

City of Kent Parks, Recreation & Community Services 2014 -Youth Flag Football Rules For 3rd/4th & 5th/6th Grade



(non-contact -Pass Only League)

Purpose: The Youth Flag Football program is to teach young children the proper fundamentals of football in a fun-filled atmosphere, free from the pressures of a highly competitive sport. In addition, teamwork, dedication, and confidence are reinforced. The flag football league is an all-pass league with no contact.

National Federation of State High School Association Football Rules will govern play with the following exceptions:

I. Team Roster

- A. All participants **must** be properly registered through Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services. Rosters are limited to no more than 14 players.
- B. 3rd/4th & 5th/6th Grade Players may be added to teams with less than 14 players on or before **October 10, 2014**. No player additions after **October 10, 2014**.

II. Field and Equipment

- A. Every member of a team must wear flag belts provided by the City of Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services. Belts and flags must be exposed and worn around players waist with individual flags on back and sides. Failure to do so is subject to an eight (8) yard penalty.
- B. Players must wear pants/sweats opposite colors of flag colors. Official and opposing coach has the right to exchange flags prior to start of game.
- C. Helmets, shoulder pads, thigh pads, or the use of any hard substance is prohibited.
- D. Footwear - Cleats must be plastic, nylon, or molded rubber. Screw-in cleats are permitted with at least 1/2" in diameter and a maximum of 3/4" in length. **No metal cleats allowed.** Players wearing illegal shoes will be ejected from the game.
- E. No "stick-um" or other foreign substance are to be used on hands by any player.
- F. The official length of the field shall be seventy-four (74) yards, which includes two seven (7) yard end zones. The width of the field shall be thirty (30) yards.
- G. The official league game ball is a junior-size football. Game ball will be supplied by City of Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services. If a league provided ball is not available at the start of a game or the ball becomes defective during use, the officials will make a decision on a ball use procedure.

III. Player Requirements

- A. Each team is allowed a maximum number of eight (8) players on the playing field.
- B. A team must start and finish with seven (7) players. If at any time a team drops below seven (7) players the game becomes a forfeit. **NO GRACE PERIOD.**
- C. Only properly registered and assigned players are eligible to play. Use of ineligible player will constitute forfeiture of games in which they play.

III. Player Requirements - continued

- D. Free, unlimited substitution on offense/defense. All players must play offense and defense during the game. Also, each player must play in both halves.
- F. **Uniforms:** All players are expected to wear sponsor t-shirts supplied by the City of Kent Parks Department while participating. (Shirts must be tucked in.)

IV. Rules of Play

- A. Only team captains who are so designated before the game begins may speak to the officials.
- B. Proximity of players to sideline - At the start of each play, no players may attempt to deceive the defense. Each player must position themselves in such a manner that is easily distinguished as a player.
- C. There will be no kickoffs. The ball will be put into play at the offensive team's ten (10) yard line.
- D. All players are eligible to receive a pass.
- E. First downs may be gained by advancing the ball into the next twenty-yard zone.
- F. Once the ball is passed over the line of scrimmage, it may not be brought back over and passed. *Play will be allowed to continue until play is dead. If intercepted play stands. All other cases – next down, no penalty will be assessed.*
- G. A forward pass that is received behind the line of scrimmage may be passed again.
- H. If the ball is advanced over the line of scrimmage by any other means than passing, the play is dead. No yardage penalty. EXCEPTION: IF A **FORWARD PASS** IS COMPLETED BEHIND THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE, BALL CARRIER MAY ADVANCE OVER THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE BY RUNNING.

Clarification:

- a) If player "A" receives the ball from a forward pass or a forward pitch behind the line of scrimmage only player "A" can advance the ball by running over the line of scrimmage. If player "A" chooses to lateral the ball to player "B" before crossing the line of scrimmage, than player "B" becomes a quarterback and the ball must be passed prior to crossing the line of scrimmage.
You must be a receiver from a forward pass or forward pitch behind the line of scrimmage to be able to run across line of scrimmage. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- b) A forward pass received across the line of scrimmage may be lateraled back across the line of scrimmage and advanced by running ball only. The ball cannot be passed when lateraled back. Play will be allowed to continue until play is dead. If intercepted play stands. All other cases – next down, no penalty will be assessed.
- I. Screening in the backfield for the quarterback and downfield for the ball carrier is legal but the player setting the screen must give defensive players a chance to avoid the screen. If contact is made, a penalty will be assessed.
- J. Between downs, any number of eligible substitutes may replace players, provided the substitution is completed by having the replaced players off the field before the ball is snapped. Players must report to their team's side of the field. Substitutions may not be used in any manner to deceive your opponents.

IV. Rules of Play – *continued*

- K. The last down in either half will be replayed if there is a penalty by either team (offense or defense) and it is accepted by the other team (offense or defense.)
- L. **Non-playing team members and spectators must remain inside the team box which is the distance between the 20-yard lines and two yards outside the sidelines.**
- M. The offensive team is responsible for returning the ball to an official or the line of scrimmage promptly. This includes attempt during fourth (4th) down.
- N. For a player who is bleeding, or has an open wound or found to have an excessive amount of blood on his/her clothing. This player MUST leave the field to:
 - 1. cover the wound
 - 2. stop the bleeding
 - 3. change soiled clothing

V. The Clock

- A. Each quarter will consist of 15 minutes running time with the exception of the last minute of the fourth quarter, which will be played "stop clock". If a team is ahead by 25 points or more prior to the last minute, there will be no stop clock in the fourth quarter.
- B. Stop Clock Period - The clock will stop at the completion of every play and start with the snap. The clock will not run for extra point conversion during the stop clock period.
- C. The game is divided into two (2) halves. There will be a five (5) minute half-time intermission.
- D. Each team may have one (1) time out per half. A time out is one (1) minute. Teams can accumulate timeouts and use both in second half.
- E. The ball must be put into play within 25 seconds of placement at the line of scrimmage by the referee when teams are ready to play. The referee will blow his/her whistle when the 25 seconds is to begin.
- F. If a team fails to put the ball into play within 25 seconds, it will be a 5-yard penalty. Any other delay-of game infractions during the same possession will result in loss of down and 5 yards.
- G. If, in the judgment of the game officials, a team is delaying in an effort to run down the clock, the team will receive one warning and then receive an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. (See IX Penalties, A.3) Continued infractions could result in a player or team being disqualified and the game forfeited.

VI. Line of Scrimmage

- A. Players on the line of scrimmage:
 - 1. The offensive team must have at least three (3) players on the line of scrimmage to begin a play.
 - 2. **There must be a 1 yard space between offensive linemen.**
 - 3. These players must be set, with hands on their knees, at the snap.
 - 4. Three point stances are not allowed on either offense or defense. (Except center snapping the ball.)

VI. Line of Scrimmage – *continued*

- B. *There shall be a 3-yard neutral zone to mark the defensive line of scrimmage. Exception: When the ball is inside the 10-yard line, the neutral zone will be the length of the football.*
- C. Only players lined up behind the line of scrimmage may be in motion; limit one player in motion each play. Player in motion must move parallel to or away from line of scrimmage.
- D. All fumbled balls are dead immediately. Exception: When offense has declared a punt, the punter may fumble or muff the ball until a legal punt has been made. (Refer to Rule VII)
- E. Muffed Balls: All muffed balls will be put into play at point of contact with field except a ball fumbled forward - ball will be placed where player lost possession.
- F. Forward handoffs are only allowed behind the line of scrimmage. *Player in control of the football is now the quarterback.*

VII. Ball Handling

- A. Open field tackling: If the ball carrier is tackled in the open field, ball carrier will be awarded an automatic touchdown.
- B. Bumping-Out on the sidelines is not permitted, unless in the judgment of the referee:
 - 1. No block was thrown.
 - 2. Unnecessary roughness is not employed.
 - 3. The ball carrier is close to the sideline.
 - 4. An attempt to pull the flag is made.
- C. If the ball carrier's flag inadvertently falls off, they may be downed by a one-hand touch by the defense. If any member of the defense pulls flags from offensive players not in possession of the ball intentionally, the offensive team shall be awarded a major penalty. (see IX Penalties, C.7)
- D. Tackling and carrying ball: The ball carrier may not run through a defensive player (they may not charge) and must attempt to evade the defense whenever possible. The defense may not hold or run through a ball carrier, but must "play the flag" rather than hold the player. In contact between the ball carrier and the defense when both are the aggressors, the ball shall be dead at the spot of contact. The official shall decide those situations just as a basketball referee rules on charging versus blocking. May result in unnecessary roughness and/or ejection.
- E. The ball carrier will be allowed to spin to elude the defense. Runner must have at least one foot on the ground.
 - 1. A ball player running with the ball may not hurdle, dive or jump in order to score or avoid having flags pulled. Penalty - Loss of 8 yards.
 - 2. A runner may not intentionally guard flag with arms or hands to prevent them from being pulled. Penalty - Loss of 8 yards from point of infraction. *(If a player has altered the flag belt in any way to prevent an opposing player from successfully pulling off the belt, they will be ejected from the game. (See X. Player Suspension, item A.)*
- F. Quarterbacks will be protected from any contact after they have thrown the ball even if the ball has been tipped. The quarterback in flag football should be treated like the basketball player shooting the ball. Contact is not allowed even after the quarterback releases the ball. Penalty for contact will be an 8 yard illegal use of hand or arm penalty and automatic first

down -roughing the passer.

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VII. Ball Handling - *continued*

- G. Touchbacks - the ball will be put into play at the offensive team's ten (10) yard line. (Interceptions may be advanced out of the end zone.)
- H. The center-snapper may adjust the ball and/or pick it up to dry off prior to the snap.
- I. An offensive player who is bumped out of bounds by a defensive player does not lose eligibility to receive the ball. Penalty will be assessed to the defense for illegal use of hand or arm.
- J. If an offensive player goes out on own accord then back into play to catch a pass. No catch – loss of down, no yardage penalty.
- K. The defense can not cross the line of scrimmage before the snap. It is encroachment for any player to cross the neutral zone. (see IX Penalties, B.10)

VIII. Punting

- A. The offensive team must notify the defense whenever they want to punt. Neither team may cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. The defense must maintain three players on the line of scrimmage and they may not attempt to block the punt.
- B. Teams may return punts from the end zone provided the ball was not muffed. Otherwise ball will be put into play at the offensive team's ten (10) yard line.
- C. After a punt, the ball may be picked up (off the ground) and advanced provided the ball was not muffed.

IX. Scoring

- A. Scoring shall be six (6) points for a touchdown and one (1) point for the extra point conversion from the three (3) yard line and two (2) points for extra point conversion from the ten (10) yard line.
- B. There will be no field goal attempts, as goal posts are not available.
- C. When the flag is pulled, the position of the runner's hip shall determine placement of the ball, unless ball has crossed goal line resulting in a touchdown.
- D. Forward motion of the ball carrier into the end zone after flag has been pulled is not counted as a touchdown. The ball is downed at the point where the flag is pulled free.
- E. A safety is scored only when the team defending the goal causes a live ball to go back over the goal line. Two (2) points are scored on a safety if the ball becomes dead in the end zone in their possession.
- F. Following a safety, the team scored against must punt the ball to the other team. (Punting from ten (10) yard line.)

X. Penalties

- A. Loss of down and yardage for the following violations:
 - 1. Illegal forward pass - 5 yards
 - 2. Offensive pass interference - 8 yards
 - 3. Unsportsmanlike conduct - 8 yards

X. Penalties - continued

B. Loss of 5 yards:

1. Delay of the game
2. Illegal substitution
3. Offside
4. False start or any illegal act by snapper
5. Free-kick infractions
6. Illegal forward pitch - point of infraction
7. Not enough players on the line of scrimmage
8. Illegal motion
9. Team box violation - 1st offense
10. Encroachment

C. Loss of 8 yards:

1. Persons illegally on field
2. Illegal use of hand or arm
3. Striking, kicking, kneeling, clipping, tackling or tripping
4. Illegal blocking
5. Charging
6. Pushing ball carrier
7. Intentionally de-flagging
8. Team box violation - 2nd offense
9. Flag guarding
10. Pass interference
11. **Casual Profanity – See Section XIII.**

Any of the preceding fouls or any foul not covered herein: If in the judgment of the game officials the foul is flagrant and/or deliberate, player shall be ejected from the game.

- D. Any distance penalty shall be no greater than half the distance to the goal line.
- E. Penalties on the offense that occur 8 yards beyond the line of scrimmage, after the pass is caught, will be administered from the spot of the foul. Penalties will include loss of down and yardage.
- F. All penalties behind the line of scrimmage will be administered from the line of scrimmage.
- G. If a first down is gained prior to the foul, the offense will not lose the first down.
- H. Offensive penalties occurring in the offenses' own end zone, if accepted will result in a safety.
- I. No blocking by the offense or using hands by the defense. **THIS IS A NON-CONTACT LEAGUE.**

XI. Player Suspension

- A. A player/coach/spectator who is ejected will be suspended a minimum of one (1) game. League Coordinators will decide on length of suspension.
- B. Only the head coach can talk with the officials before and during the game. Coaches, players, parents or spectators **are not** allowed to discuss, review or talk with the game officials once the game is over. This may result in a minimum one (1) game suspension. After the game, congratulate the kids for playing a great game and enjoy the post game snack.

XI. Player Suspension- *continued*

- C. Any coach, player, parent or spectator who is confrontational, threatens or is verbally/physically abusive, in any way towards an official, player, coach, parent, spectator or city employee before, during or after the game will be suspended for a minimum of two (2) games to a maximum expulsion from all Kent Parks programs and must have Program Coordinator permission to be reinstated.
- D. Players/coaches/spectators ejected from the game will have no more than three (3) minutes to leave the facility or automatically forfeit the game and face possible expulsion from the league.
- E. Any participant that is suspended from school is ineligible to partake in practices or games until their suspension has been completed.
- F. Coaches and assistant coaches are responsible for the actions of their players and spectators. Unsportsmanlike conduct by a player(s) and/or spectator(s) will result in immediate removal from the field or the team will automatically forfeit the game.
- G. Any player/coach/spectator suspended cannot accompany the team to any scheduled games during the suspension.
- H. Coaches and players are responsible for players/spectators actions. Failure to assist in calming player/spectators down after request for help from an official/field supervisor can result in being ejected.
- I. **Casual Profanity:** Casual profanity pertains to expletives and verbal unsportsmanlike language not necessarily directed at the officials or opposing players, but is uttered by a player out of frustration. This type of behavior is penalized by "loss of eight (8) yards" being declared against the offending team.
 - 1. If the act is committed by the offensive team the penalty will be a loss of eight (8) yards for the offense.
 - 2. If the act is committed by the defensive team, the offensive team will be awarded eight (8) yards.
 - 3. If the violation occurs at the end of the game the ejection rule will be applied.

The "Casual Profanity Rule" provides a lesser penalty for the gray area between accepted conduct and those situations where the offender must be ejected. This rule is to discourage the ball players from saying things, which others may feel are offensive. It has been discovered that the players will police themselves when this rule is applied.
- J. The City of Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services Program Coordinators have the authority to make rulings on any and all dealings regarding this league. All decisions are final

XII. Tie Games

In the event that a game is tied at the end of regulation time, an overtime period will be played.

- A. An additional coin toss will be held. The winner of the coin toss will choose either offense or defense, or which end of the field overtime will take place. The loser will have the choice of the remaining options.

- B. Each team will be granted 1 time out per overtime period. Time outs will not carry over from regulation or previous overtime periods.

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XII. Tie Games- continued

- C. To start overtime, the offensive team shall put the ball in play, 1st and goal, on the defensive teams twenty (20) yard line. The first offensive team shall have a series of four (4) downs. The series will end if: 1. Offensive team scores. 2. Defensive team gains possession. 3. Offensive team fail to score after four (4) downs.
- D. If the offensive team scores a touchdown, it will be entitled to its extra point, unless the game is already won with the score. ***If defensive team gains possession extra point try is complete.***
- E. After the first team on offense has completed its series of downs, the first defensive team will become the offensive team and the procedure shall be repeated, at the same end of the field. ***After Two (2) overtime periods the game shall be declared a tie.***

XIII. Parking

- A. Please follow the advise of local and state Police Departments regarding vehicle theft prevention. Don't make it easy for car theft prowlers. Please remember to conceal your valuables, (wallets, purses, handbags, cameras, etc...) out of view or leave them at home. Please help by following these simple steps. Thank you.

XIV. Miscellaneous

- A. **Winning Coach** is responsible for calling in the score to the City of Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services. The department has a 24-hour Record-a-Call answering machine. Scores can be called in to **(253) 856-5021** after the games. Scores must be called in after each game.
- B. **NO PROTESTS ARE ALLOWED**
- C. **Remember:** Please do not yell at nor "Ride" the officials. You must set the example. You set the tone for player's and parent's reaction.

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